

LACDMH HOSTS SYMPOSIUM FOR CALWORKS PARTICIPANTS

By Karen Zarsadiaz-Ige, Public Information Officer II



The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) Adults System of Care (ASOC) CalWORKs program hosted its first-ever symposium for CalWORKs participants entitled “Working toward My Future” on Tuesday, January 22, 2013 at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles.

More than 150 people attended the day-long symposium. The welcome and opening remarks were made by CalWORKs District Chief Dolores Daniel, LCSW, and ASOC Deputy Director Cathy Warner, LCSW. During welcoming remarks, Warner told the audience members to hold onto what makes them unique and special. “Each of you has a personal story. It’s important to keep that story of yours. Do not lose your personal identity. Keep your authenticity and share your story with others,” she said.



One of those individuals who shared her own success story during the symposium was Amanda Jillian-Lamond Holden. She was the keynote speaker for the event who shared her own inspirational story. Holden was a former CalWORKS participant who worked hard to become a medical doctor while raising two sons as a single mother. She stressed the importance of setting goals and staying the course with the help of support systems like family and friends. Now, Holden is an attending physician at a San Diego area hospital and married with three sons. Throughout her journey, she reminded herself of why she was working hard and the type of role model she wanted to be for her young children. “What you model now will shape them (your kids) in the future”, Dr. Holden told the audience.

After the morning speaker, attendees went to workshops and also participated in a peer-to-peer session throughout the day . The goal of the symposium was to increase hope, dignity, self-work and resiliency toward employment. Organizers were happy with the turnout, including Yenee Page, MSW, CalWORKS Administration, who praised the audience. “We are pleased to have you here today because you chose to be here today,” she said.

